

had been no breakdown in the
 administration of the
 Boards of Guardians, which had become, on
 the contrary,
 under the continued supervision of the Local
 Government
 Board, steadily more efficient and more
 humane The
 'Principles of 1834'^c were assumed to be in
 operation,
 and they were professedly endorsed by
 the dominant
 philosophy and administrative experience
 of the time
 Criticism there was, but it came from
 conflicting schools
 of thought, and, owing to the consequent
 'cancelling out/
 it had produced little effect upon public
 opinion The
 personnel of the new Commission differed
 radically from
 that of its predecessor For good or evil,
 the score of
 persons appointed to be Royal
 Commissioners in 1905
 were far from homogeneous in opinion
 Although the
 majority of them represented the views
 of those who
 approved of the existing order, they
 found themselves
 faced by able critics of the very basis of the
 Poor Law
 Amendment Act of 1834 Thus the
 evidence collected
 by the Commissioners themselves, and
 by the staff of
 expert investigators whom they appointed,
 however accurate
 and comprehensive it might be, was used to
 support con-
 clusions based on conflicting views of social
 expediency
 The Majority and the Minority Reports were
 both elaborate
 documents, alike more comprehensive in their
 scope and
 in their recommendations than the
 unanimous Report
 of 1834, they had a record sale, and attracted
 wide-spread
 attention, but in spite of a large measure of

agreement
in their proposals they ranged those who were
interested
in social reconstruction in two opposing
camps After
many promises on the part of successive
Cabinets, in the
course of a couple of decades, neither the
one Report
nor the other has been embodied in legislation
and even
the changes which the Majority and Minority
alike advocated
long failed to pass into law The Royal
Commission of
1905-9 was, in fact, from a constructive
standpoint, as